# NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER, 1942 PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS • CHICAGO VOL. 10, NO. 1

## *Proclamation . . . . . .*

WE ARE bound together because of our love for children and because we have learned to appreciate the strength that lies in unity of purpose and coordination of effort. We know the importance to our national life of safeguarding all children the country over. We know that the promise of democracy cannot be realized until all children are given equal opportunities for self-development; until all enjoy the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To this end we have dedicated our activities and made meaningful our Objects.

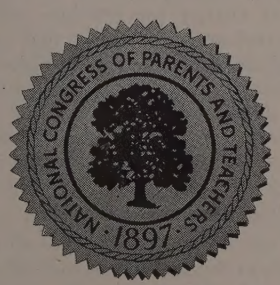
AND NOW war makes our obligation to children greater than it has ever been before. Today there are graver hazards than any we have known, and from these we must protect our children. Physical danger, emotional strain, and exploitation and neglect of children are grim and unrelenting partners of every war. We must enlist an increasing number of men and women, parents and teachers, to combat their menacing advance against childhood and youth.

*Now Therefore:* I, Virginia Kletzer, president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, do hereby designate the month beginning October 1 as Membership Enrollment Month, and I earnestly request that every unit and every member of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers make known the opportunities for service to American childhood and youth in our home front army, to the end that our ranks may be augmented and made stronger to achieve our highest goals. Effective parenthood, secure childhood, and responsible citizenship are essential to a nation's social and spiritual well-being at any time. They are mandatory for a nation bending every ounce of strength and every resource to protect its way of life, a way of life basic to Christian civilization and all that it holds dear.

To this proclamation, accordingly, I have set my hand and the seal of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Virginia Kletzer

*President*
*National Congress of Parents and Teachers*




## BIRNEY MEMORIAL DEDICATION

*September 27, 1942*

THE dedication of the Alice McLellan Birney Memorial will take place in Marietta, Georgia, on Sunday, September 27, beginning at 2:45 p.m., Eastern War Time. A large group is expected to make the pilgrimage to the birthplace of the Founder of the National Congress after the meeting of the Board of Managers of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers in Atlanta.

A broadcast over NBC from 3 to 3:15 p.m., Eastern War Time, will include the unveiling of the memorial by Alice Birney Robert, great-granddaughter of the Founder, and the presentation speech by Mrs. William Kletzer, national president.

Following the broadcast, a processional of state presidents will take place across the memorial plaza where the marble stones from the states have been placed about the central sundial pedestal. An informal reception will be held after the ceremonies. Mrs. Fred M. Raymond, chairman of the committee on Programs and Founders Day, has served as chairman of the special committee to confer regarding the memorial, appointed more than two years ago. Other special committee members are Mrs. Charles D. Center, national secretary, and Mrs. James K. Lytle, national treasurer.

Built on a sloping corner of the grounds of the Marietta High School, recently renamed the Alice McLellan Birney High School, the memorial occupies an attractive site. Marble benches complete the artistic grouping, edged with boxwood and colorful plantings as a symbol of the ongoing life of the Founder.

## AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

*November 8-14, 1942*

American Education Week is sponsored by: National Education Association, American Legion, U. S. Office of Education, and National Congress of Parents and Teachers. General theme: Education for Free Men. Plan now to participate.

# NEA REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE NCPT

THE National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the National Education Association are pledged to uphold the ideals and purposes of American democracy. We seek to achieve this end through organized programs along several fronts. Focusing upon the enrichment of home and family life, the development of children, the advancement of schools, and the improvement of communities, we have found it feasible and rewarding to correlate our efforts to reach our common goals.

For we have common goals, which call for united action in specific projects. The joint committee report of last year called attention to our community of interests as expressed in our respective programs for the last five years. It was pointed out that the platforms and findings of both organizations emphasized community projects in art, music, drama, recreation, and other leisure-time activities; freedom to learn; preparation for group living; Federal aid for education; and other matters dealing with the American educational system and its working philosophy.

Accordingly, the committee made six recommendations. Specifically, these relate to making home and school cooperation more effective, providing for the exchange of materials, arranging for speakers for community meetings, organizing lists of available films showing good school practices, preparing interesting articles on the work of the schools for widely circulated periodicals, and commending authors who present the story of the American schools in its true light. Both organizations at once went into action to strengthen their programs in each of these directions.

## PRESENT CRISIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

NOW we meet in our respective conventions at the time of another world conflagration. The gains of history are at stake, and human values hang in the balance. Freedom and tyranny are engaged in a life-and-death struggle. We need not review the ugly effects of war upon our homes, schools, churches, economy, and daily life.

The experience of the last World War proved the importance of upholding education in a time of crisis. Nations at war today are strengthening their schools and supporting their educational institutions as instruments of victory. If schools and colleges are allowed to slump in wartime they cannot assume their vital role in reconstruction. Schools serve the nation in peace and in war.

Recent word from Britain advises that it is a mistake to separate families, rob pulpits of their preachers, close schoolrooms, or reduce social welfare programs. Already it is estimated that the teacher shortage in this country will exceed 60,000 during this year unless budgetary adjustments are made. Especially acute is the situation in rural areas because of the draining off of the better-prepared teachers from rural schools to schools of urban areas and to other types of work. The exodus of good teachers and the influx of teachers who are less well qualified will weaken the quality of the educational program at the very time when it should be strengthened. The results of the shortage will be felt not only during the war but for many years after its end.

We repeat with our daily prayers the pledge to go "all out" in the war effort. Our task is to set up a working program for cooperative action between our two great bodies that will help to speed the triumph of freedom on the battlefield, uphold vital values on the home front, and render the most effective service possible in winning the peace and meeting the needs of reconstruction.

## AREAS FOR JOINT ACTION

COOPERATION in the war effort of the nation to defeat the enemies of free people and free institutions is our supreme duty. Our programs should be constantly adjusted to meet wartime needs. Nothing counts except that which helps to save freedom for ourselves and our posterity.

We recognize that it is necessary to hold the line of learning if freedom is to inherit the earth and a more glorious tomorrow is to rise out of the blood, sweat, and tears of today.

To give hands and feet to this program of victory for freedom we point out several areas of service that call for specific cooperation. These by no means constitute a complete list of basic things to be done now. They are not to be looked upon as representing a complete program of education. But they may serve as starting points for cooperative efforts on state and local levels.

1. Work for victory. Relate all activities to the war effort, so that educational priorities may be given foremost attention.

   For detailed information on wartime duties, see *A War Policy for American Schools* (a bulletin of the Educational Policies Commission); the *National Parent-Teacher*, particularly the War Supplement; the December issue of the *National Congress Bulletin;* and publications of the U.S. Office of Education.

2. Make curricular changes in line with changing needs, so that the schools may serve the nation in war as well as in peace.

   For specific information, read the reports of the American Youth Commission and the N.E.A. and A.A.S.A. yearbooks.

3. Strengthen your programs of physical fitness, recreation, leisure, safety, nutrition, conservation, and library service. This is a big order, but all of these areas are vital in our fight for democracy.

   For helps, refer to the sources listed above. Refer also to *Children in Democracy*, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

4. Exercise caution in acceleration of programs. Urge young people to stay in college in order to become better equipped to serve our country.

   Before making precipitate changes, study the probable effects of the proposals on present and future needs. It may be advisable not to speed elementary programs but rather to make adjustments in special cases on the secondary and collegiate levels. The plans should be flexible enough to avoid bottlenecks and at the same time not skimp on essentials.

5. Spotlight the values of freedom and the meaning of democracy, and emphasize the knowledge, discipline, and loyalties of free men. Develop the morale needed by adults and youth to speed up production and reduce consumption for victory.

   For information, read the book *The Education of Free Men*, issued by the Educational Policies Commission; also the Commission's report *Learning the Ways of Democracy.*

6. Recruit and hold qualified personnel in the schools by adjusting salaries and advancing the status and standards of the teaching profession, so that school efficiency may be maintained during the emergency. This is absolutely necessary to safeguard the educational welfare of the children and the interests of the public.

(Continued on page 3)

7. Continue to work toward Federal aid for education, so that democracy may be strengthened through greater equality of opportunity for all our people.

   For information, write direct to the N.E.A. office in Washington, D.C., or to your Congressmen. Refer also to the N.C.P.T. publication, *Schools for Democracy*, and the Report of the Advisory Committee on Education, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

8. Increase provisions for adult education, so that people in all parts of our country may keep informed on important issues. Include guidance services for youth in and out of school.

   For helps in planning forums, write to the U.S. Office of Education. For data and materials on special topics, consult publications of the National Congress, the N.E.A., and the American Youth Commission.

9. Develop the leadership needed to win the war and make a lasting peace. Democracy needs expertness as well as participation.

   The articles in *The Journal of the National Education Association* and the *National Parent-Teacher*, as well as the other publications of the Congress and of the N.E.A., are helpful sources of information.

10. Intensify the interpretation and exemplification of vital values on the home front, so that the schools and homes may preserve and strengthen them and may build tomorrow today.

    This calls for definite activities that interpret and honor the work of the schools in our American democracy. The references previously mentioned will be helpful.

IN ORDER to implement the aforementioned proposals in these areas of service, to move forward along these fronts, to strengthen the ramparts of freedom on the home front, and to hold the line of learning, schools and homes must be strengthened. Children do not grow up twice. They are not responsible for wars or depressions. They pay the toll.

Consequently, the educational program must not be allowed to become isolated from the community life and needs, insulated from change, or anemic in performance. While it preserves the culture of the ages, it also services all other agencies and inspires youth to write new chapters in the story of human progress.

***Please call the report to the attention of local chairmen of School Education committees.***

# CONVENTION SECTION MEETINGS

Three timely and well-implemented section meetings were held at the recent national convention in San Antonio, Texas. Unit and council responsibility and opportunity in wartime were discussed in the first two meetings, and cooperative planning with youth occupied the third. Abridged presentations of the findings of each meeting are here presented, in the hope that parent-teacher leaders who were unable to attend the convention will find them both interesting and useful.

## The Work of the Local Unit in Wartime

*Discussion Leader:* Mrs. James K. Lytle, treasurer

LOCAL units of the P.T.A. can perform many services of great value to their communities during wartime. Some of these activities are: (1) cooperation with the local defense council; (2) arrangement for identification tags and complete registration for every child; (3) making an "Open House" available to children in each block or area in case parents are absent during air raid alerts; (4) providing the principal with a complete registration of the parents of all children in the school; (5) inclusion of all unit wartime activities and the interpretation of the program to the community in the duties of the war emergency or defense chairman.

Play groups sponsored by the parent-teacher association offer parents an opportunity to observe their children in a social unit, meanwhile learning the laws of growth, play, rest, and learning as applied to the young child. No study course is required, but regular attendance at least three hours per week is desirable. It is suggested that the mother always accompany her child.

Spiritual training should be reestablished in the home, and parents should seek to cultivate inner peace based on faith in themselves, in each other, and in God.

## Unity Achieved Through the Council

*Discussion Leader:* Mrs. Warren L. Mabrey, vice-president

NEW responsibilities have been placed on the parent-teacher association council by the demands of the war. Especially should the local council seek to achieve unity of effort among its member associations and with other agencies handling common activities. National Congress publications on war problems, such as the Defense Activity leaflet, the Wartime Pledge, the Children's Charter, the "War Extra" edition of the *National Congress Bulletin*, and the wartime supplements in the *National Parent-Teacher*, furnish direction and inspiration.

Specific activities for the council include measures to: (1) uphold and strengthen the schools during the emergency; (2) interpret the function of agriculture in winning the war; (3) develop community attitudes favorable to equal opportunity for all children; (4) correlate community projects designed to meet community needs, such as the school lunch, home and school gardens, and recreation; (5) help parents in the community to realize their responsibility to their own children.

## Planning Together With Youth

*Discussion Leader:* Mrs. J. W. Bingham, vice-president

YOUTH'S problems are really community problems and are largely the same in wartime as in peacetime. Members of the panel emphasized that youth is not a separate group, but an integral part of the population. Community problems can be solved by a cooperative learning process, which should include increased opportunity for discussion by all persons in the community.

Bored adults cannot inspire youth. Young people will "catch" and copy democracy, if it is lived in the community, more rapidly than it can be taught to them. And the recreation problem, as well as many other "youth" and community problems, will disappear if individuals will develop their own inner resources and if families, schools, and community groups will offer more play and more creative and cultural activities to make life enjoyable.

Each community should work out its own plans to make group life more interesting, using schools and other community resources to a full extent.

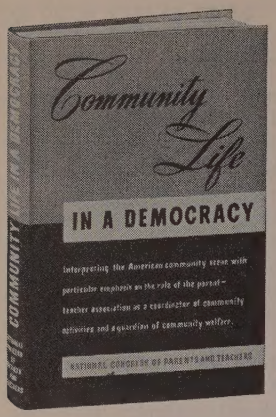
**NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN**

Volume 10 SEPTEMBER, 1942 Number 1

Published monthly from September through May, bimonthly June and July, at 600 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Subscription price: 20 cents a year.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office, Chicago, Illinois, Jan. 18, 1941. Additional entry at Aurora, Illinois, Dec. 21, 1939. Under Act of March 3, 1879.




**JUST OFF PRESS**

•

**$1 a Copy**

•

**256 pp.**

Published by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers for the use of parent-teacher and other citizen workers. Contains questions and references for the use of study groups. Authorize today the purchase of a copy for your P.T.A.

## Fire Prevention Week, October 4-10

AS A PART of the national war effort, the cooperation of all parent-teacher associations is asked in promoting the 1942 observance of Fire Prevention Week, October 4 to 10. In his proclamation, the President of the United States called upon the Office of Civilian Defense, which is responsible for civil protection in wartime, to assume leadership in the observance, and he asked "educators and civic groups," among others, to assist in "promoting widespread realization of the dangers of fire and knowledge of the methods of controlling it." Suggestions:

1. *Sponsor community and neighborhood meetings on fire prevention and fire fighting problems, fire ordinance enforcement, and clean-up for fire prevention.*
2. *Sponsor a fire prevention essay contest for school children with the approval of school authorities; support other school or youth activities.*
3. *Participate in community activities, such as parades and home inspection programs.*
4. *Recommend speakers for talks on fire safety for community groups or radio stations.*
5. *Publicize Fire Prevention Week activities, and facts and figures about community fire losses.*

• • •

**AN ARTICLE entitled "What Parent-Teacher Associations Can Do," by Mrs. William Kletzer, national president, appeared in the June 1942 issue of *Understanding the Child*, a magazine for teachers published by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.**

## A GOOD AND GALLANT SOLDIER

SURELY now, as we stand together against the invasion of any and all harm to the children and youth of our country, we are comrades in arms. As the stress of the hour emphasizes the bonds that unite us to each other and to our organization as a whole, let us think once more what a good and gallant soldier the *National Parent-Teacher* has always been. Not only now but all down the years, whenever and wherever there was need, our Magazine has risen to the occasion with the strength and staunchness of a seasoned campaigner.

It has done:

1. **SENTRY DUTY —**
   - On Guard for Education
   - Holding the Line of Learning
   - The Moral Care of Children
   - The Young Mother Faces War
   - Courage for Crisis
2. **INTELLIGENCE SERVICE —**
   - Democracy as a Great Social Faith
   - Roots of the Tree of Liberty
   - These We Hold Dear
   - The Discipline of Free Men
   - Citizen Recruits for Democracy
3. **CIVILIAN GUARD DUTY —**
   - The Tightened Belt
   - The Home and the War
   - The Family Takes the Job
   - Books: Guardians of Growth
   - You and Your Baby's Health
4. **And when necessary, it has shown itself capable of VIGOROUS ATTACK —**
   - Those Troublesome Comics
   - The Creative Way Out
5. **It has championed the STRENGTHENING OF OUR NATIONAL DEFENSES at highly strategic points —**
   - War Marriages: 48 Hours' Leave
   - Fear and Anger in Children
   - The Stranger Within
   - Financing Education During the War
   - What You Should Know About Rent Control
   - Priorities for Prodigies
   - Who Has the Youth Has the Future
6. **It is a VETERAN of many victories!**

Nor do we stand alone in respecting the Magazine. The *National Parent-Teacher* has won renown beyond our own frontiers. It is everywhere recognized as sound and authoritative, one of the most important educational journals of our day. This being the case, let us give it the loyal support to which it is entitled. Let us perpetuate and increase its service to parents and to America's children. Let us make every passing day add to its national importance and permanent value.

**If you are a local president —** *Authorize today the purchase of a club of subscriptions for the use of your association.*

**If you are a member of a state parent-teacher board —** *Subscribe for yourself and then show others how to use the Magazine.*

The *National Parent-Teacher* is the voice of our organization's ideals. Let us enable that voice to be heard wherever there is an intelligent man or woman to listen.

## A NEW P.T.A. SERVICE TO P.T.A. FAMILIES

*Motion Picture Previews,* a reliable guide to intelligent moviegoing, made its first appearance in the September 1942 issue of the *National Parent-Teacher* Magazine. Each month in the previews section will be presented brief but complete summary estimates of current films with evaluation of their merits for young children, for adolescents, and for the family as a unit.

Readable, concise, and thoroughly discriminating, these estimates are prepared by a committee of experienced parent-teacher workers from a sound and constructive parent-teacher point of view.

It is hoped that parents will find the list helpful. The Magazine may not reach all readers before some of the films reviewed have been shown in the first-run theatres. However, both price and location make the subsequent showings more often patronized by families; so it is confidently hoped that all the estimates will be of value.

*Please call this new feature to the attention of local chairmen of Motion Pictures and Visual Education Committees.*

• • •

**THE National Parent-Teacher is an appropriate gift to a young mother whose husband is in one of the armed services. She will welcome the series of articles on "Babies in Wartime."**